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ARMY COMMUNICATOR

7th Signal Command (Theater) has a new home

Plus:

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COL James Turinetti IV
Signal School Commandant

CSM Darien Lawshea
Signal Corps Regimental Command Sergeant Major

CW5 Chris Westbrook
Signal Corps Regimental Chief Warrant Officer

Nicholas M. Spinelli
Editor-in-Chief

On the Cover

7th Signal Command (Theater) recently relocated from Fort Gordon, Ga. To Fort Meade, Md.
Photo provided by 7th Signal Command (Theater)

Signal Regimental Team

COL James Turinetti IV
Signal School
Commandant

October is a special time of year. Night comes earlier, the mornings and evening are a little cooler, PCS season is over, and many are settling into their new roles. It's a season of embracing and cementing change. Which makes it fitting that this is the month when Phase 1 of our Enlisted Career Management Field 25 MOS Convergence becomes effective.

We have an update on the specifics of MOS Convergence – what it means, who is impacted, and where we go with it next – later in this issue, but I want to take a moment to thank the team who has been shepherding this initiative from the beginning. You've all accomplished something amazing, and it's going to have a profound impact on the future of our force. It's an incredible accomplishment and it's an honor to be here as it takes effect.

Let's change direction for moment and have a quick conversation about COVID. While in many areas, cases are declining, there are still some where they are very much on the rise. We must be vigilant, and maintain all required safety protocol, which means wearing masks, observing social distancing whenever possible, and getting vaccinated. This last point is now a non-negotiable. According Lt. Gen. R. Scott Dingle, the US Army Surgeon General, "protecting the force through mandatory vaccination is a health and readiness priority for the total Army." If you have not already received your vaccination, due so immediately.

Finally, let's all take a moment to congratulate 7th Signal Command (Theater) on completing their move to Fort Meade! An undertaking of this magnitude took a lot of planning and, as you'll see over the next few pages, the team hit every benchmark expertly.

Thank you all for remaining committed and dedicated to the mission of the school house, the Signal Regiment, and the US Army. Our force is strongest when we all work together for the common good.

Pro Patria Vigilans!

CSM Darien Lawshea
Regimental CSM

CW5 Chris Westbrook
Regimental CWO

7th Signal Command (Theater) begins a new era

Stephen Satkowski
7th Signal Command (Theater) Public Affairs

7th Signal Command (Theater) held a change of command ceremony at Fort Meade, Maryland on Sept. 1, 2021, to welcome Col. Mark D. Miles as its new commander, and say farewell to outgoing commander Maj. Gen. Christopher L. Eubank. The change of command, held at the Fort Meade post theater on a late summer morning, was preceded by a ceremony where Maj. Gen. Eubank and Command Sergeant Major Michael Starrett uncased the command's colors, marking the transition of 7th Signal Command from its former home at Fort Gordon, Georgia, to its new headquarters at Fort Meade.

The Department of Defense (DOD) approved the move in January 2021, following the relocation of Army Cyber Command (ARCYBER) from the National Capital Region (NCR) to Fort Gordon in June 2020. This move puts 7th Signal Command in a better position to coordinate and synchronize Department of Defense Information Networks (DODIN)-Army operations with Defense Systems Information Agency (DISA), Information Systems Agency (ISA), Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ)-DODIN, and key NCR stakeholders.

Presiding over the ceremony was Maj. Gen. Maria Barrett, Commanding General of NETCOM. In a speech at the ceremony, Barrett remarked that Eubank performed admirably as he helped support CONUS signal forces, synchronized efforts with the Joint Global DODIN, and executed organizational realignment, orchestrating all of this under the conditions of the most formidable telework environment in American history.

"Plainly said, Chris, along with his Soldiers, civilians, and contractors, performed like the Apollo 13 mission-control team, because when we figured out COVID might be a problem, he and 7th Signal Command truly embodied [the saying], 'failure is not an option,'" said Barrett.

Barrett thanked Eubank's wife, Kim Eubank, and their

Maj. Gen. Christopher L. Eubank (left), outgoing 7th Signal Command (Theater) Commanding General and Command Sgt. Maj. Michael R. Starrett (right), 7th Signal Command, uncase the command's colors at an uncasing and change of command ceremony at Fort Meade's post theater on Sept. 1, 2021.
Photo by Spc. Mario A. Hernandez Lopez

family for their dedication and for providing steady leadership during what was a difficult time of transition amid a deadly pandemic.

"Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Mrs. Eubank still availed herself to gather and disseminate critical information to families during this unsettling time," said Barrett. "Moreover, she worked in conjunction with the installation family readiness group by collecting food for the Golden Harvest Food Bank for military families who were struggling."

Later this fall, Maj. Gen. Eubank will become the NETCOM Commanding General at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, taking over from Maj. Gen. Barrett. Eubank said the task of moving from Fort Gordon to the NCR has not been without its challenges, but it will make the 7th that much more lethal in accomplishing its mission.

"This move comes at the right time for the Army as we look to establish relationships and partnerships in the National Capital Region on behalf of ARCYBER and NETCOM, enabling more effective collaboration in support of DODIN-Army operations," said Eubank. "The 7th Signal Command will allow for presence at the point of need inside the NCR allowing ARCYBER and NETCOM to operate and defend the enterprise at the speed of war, truly working towards information and decision dominance every day."

Maj. Gen. Maria B. Barrett, Commanding General U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology Command (NETCOM) passes the 7th Signal Command (Theater) colors to Col. Mark D. Miles, 7th Signal Command (Theater) commander at a ceremony at Fort Meade's post theater, Sept. 1, 2021. Photo by Spc. Mario A. Hernandez Lopez

Assuming command is Col. Mark D. Miles, who most recently served as Director of Operations/J3 at JFHQ -DODIN. He also previously served, among many other roles, as Army CIO/G6 current operations chief, and commander of the 516th Signal Brigade, responsible for installing, managing, and defending Army networks throughout the Pacific area of operations.

Maj. Gen. Barrett welcomed Miles, along with his wife, Col. Melissa Miles, and their family, saying, "Mark, as you take command, your care and commitment to your personnel and families, your leadership, warfighting skills, and vision are the measures of your success."

In his remarks, Miles thanked Maj. Gen. Eubank and his family for the hospitality and guidance during the transition and leaving the command in a better place after his 15 months as commanding officer.

"His influence on the command is obvious. [Maj. Gen. Eubank] did a re-

Maj. Gen. Christopher L. Eubank (left), outgoing 7th Signal Command (Theater) Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Maria B. Barrett, Commanding General U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology Command (NETCOM) and Col. Mark D. Miles, 7th Signal Command (Theater) incoming commander Photo by Spc. Mario A. Hernandez Lopez

markable job during the pandemic, balancing the many critical missions while prioritizing the health and safety of team 7th and setting them up for this historic transition," said Miles.

Miles said he looks forward to moving 7th's mission forward at its new home in the National Capital Region.

"I'll do my best to continue this team's tradition of excellence and long record of success in accomplishing the mission," said Miles. "The next chapter for this organization will involve significant change and evolution as we establish our presence here at Fort Meade, modernize the unified network, and continue to ensure the cyber domain supports and enables Army and Department of Defense missions across the globe. Melissa and I look forward to being a positive influence on this amazing organization."

This was the first time the 7th's colors were shown since they were cased at a previous ceremony in July at the previous headquarters at Fort Gordon.

7th Signal Command will execute split-based operations with intelligence, operations, planning, and select special and personal staff functions moving to Fort Meade, Maryland. Relocating workforce includes 76 Department of the Army Civilians (DACs) and 55 Military personnel. The personnel, acquisition, and resource management functions remain at Fort Gordon. Remaining workforce includes 69 DACs and 10 Military personnel.

The 7th Signal Command's mission is to install, operate, and defend network and mission command capabilities for joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational forces within the Western hemisphere in support of unified land operations, and when directed, support other national missions and contingency operations.

7th Signal Command was activated on 1 July 1975 at Fort Ritchie, Maryland, and was tasked to oversee and support all CONUS signal operations, complementing 5th Signal Command in Europe and 6th Signal Command in the Pacific. The command provided communications, automation, visual information, printing and publications, and records management services to CONUS army units.

7th Signal Command was deactivated on 1 October 1993 and its functional support components were redistributed to Fort Detrick, Maryland and several other posts. On 22 July 2008, 7th Signal Command was reactivated as part of the "Grow the Army" initiative.

7th Signal Command's three subordinate Signal Brigades are 93rd Signal Brigade, headquartered at Fort Eustis, Virginia; 106th Signal Brigade at Fort Sam Houston, Texas; and 21st Signal Brigade at Fort Detrick, Maryland.

Everything as a Service: The future of Signal support

Lt. Col. Matthew G. Miller and CW2 Ronnie Eriksson
21st Theater Sustainment Command

In movies depicting the future of warfare, military communications and the distribution of mission command just works. The protagonist may stand in front of a glass wall and populate information on the screen with a flick of the wrist. The Soldier on the battlefield looks into a small reticle or brings up a video call through her contact lens to update superiors or coordinate attacks on the enemy with her squad. As the Army G6, Lt. Gen. John Morrison has stated, “the ability to have a network that delivers the right information and data at the right time to command posts and leaders is going to be absolutely imperative. We need the ability to rapidly deploy and rapidly connect to this unified network at the speed and range that enable decision dominance.”

Today, as the last tanks and helicopters are loaded aboard their vessels and the sun sets on DEFENDER Europe 21, we take a moment to reflect on a year of significant achievement and innovation for the 21st Theater Sustainment Command (TSC). In this article, we will explore options evaluated during DEFENDER Europe 21 to improve our capability, provide nominal options and performance, and identify a way ahead for Signal support Communications as we bridge potential capability gaps towards Army Aimpoint 2035. With an eye on the tactical PACE plan and simplicity, we believe that decision dominance can be delivered through “Everything as a Service.”

21st TSC Soldiers hone their skills in preparation for DEFENDER-21. Photo by CW2 Ronnie Eriksson

Everything as a Service (XaaS) as a business model means focusing on decreasing complexity, reducing spare parts and reducing service costs by only providing the functionality of a product that the customer needs. It is lean by nature, strives for a positive user experience by avoiding downtime, and is cost beneficial. In relation to Mission Command Systems (MCS), an “as a Service" business model approach would provide the core functions of MCS, such as a Common Operating Picture (COP), voice, email and other collaboration tools to support the commander's decision making process. Moreover, the process behind the MCS, such as the Intel analyst inserting data into the Distributed Common Ground System (DCGS) is what feeds the service to the commander, all from servers that sit in remote sanctuary locations. Satellite communications (SATCOM) is another area that can fall under the XaaS business model, either by centralizing and managing equipment in theater or leasing equipment and services from commercial vendors.

The 3-101st Airborne Division successfully tested the concept of distributed mission command at JRTC rota-

tion 19-05 using a form of augmented mission command support. They hosted all of their MCS in a sanctuary location close to the tactical edge, a concept that the 18th Airborne Corps has since picked up in developing the “Dragon Cloud". The 21st TSC is using a similar approach for distributed mission command by providing MCaaS from our headquarters location in Panzer Kaserne, Germany. All of our MCS reside on Panzer; connected to the tactical and strategic mission partner network over a persistent Global Agile Integrated Transport (GAIT) connection to the Regional Hub Node (RHN). In addition to basic services such as voice, email and active directory, the MCS services hosted on Panzer Kaserne include Global Command and Control System (GCCS-A), Logistics Functional Area Services (LOGFAS), Transverse chat and Command Post Computing Environment (CPCE).

Dr.Raj Iyer, Army Chief Information Officer has punctuated “the importance of industry IT and network innovations that can be applied to military capability requirements, with establishing a unified network as a top priority to enable multi-domain operations.”

For communicators in a TSC, our mission is to support and enable “Operational Reach, Prolonged Endurance, and Freedom of Action” for the theater Army and ultimately the land component command maneuver force conducting multi-domain operations. As such, over the course of the past year, we achieved increased interoperability between US and NATO forces and creativity in designing flexible network options and packages. We tested the limits of existing technologies and Soldier ingenuity in a COVID-19 denied environment by developing multi-

21st TSC Help Desk Soldiers set up tactical communications for the 21st TSC TAC.
Photo by CW2 Ronnie Eriksson

21st TSC leaders prepare for DEFENDER Europe. Photo by CW2 Ronnie Eriksson

ple mission command fly-away terminals operable by any Soldier regardless of military occupational specialty (MOS). Keep it Simple and Secure (KiSS) became the motto and desired end state of the Mission

Because the individual deploying the equipment was MOS agnostic, the equipment needed to work with minimal input or troubleshooting required. It also needed to work every time the equipment transited or "jumped" locations. The goal: to eliminate the "fault lies between keyboard and chair" problem as much as possible through the use of labeling, color coding, fault-proofing and creating easy to read diagrams. Some of the fault-proofing techniques used included simply inserting a spare RJ45 connector into an unused port on the router/switch and using a sharpie marker to color in the ports based on network enclave to aid in reducing the possibility of physical cabling errors. To further increase simplicity, the 21st TSC MCaaS fly away packages leveraged a commercial colorless connection into the GAIT network for Mission Partner Environment (MPE) services. This connection enabled the forward deployed TAC and TOC to seamlessly authenticate against, use services and be monitored by equipment and software residing at 21st TSC HQ.

"Deliver a Service, not a Cable." These are the words from Lt. Col. (ret.) Joshua Trimble in an article on how to be a successful Signal officer, and underpins our quest for providing MCaaS in easy to deliver and operate network packages. The need for a plug-and-play MCaaS capability became more relevant at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic when travel restrictions made it near impossible to personally hand deliver equipment.

To fill the gap we built three plug-and-play Mission Partner Environment (MPE) MCaaS packages for our Area Support Group (ASG) commanders. These kits were designed

to be received by MOS immaterial personnel and provided a pre-configured and validated coalition network package, one pre-registered Secure Voice over Internet Protocol (SVOIP) phone, and one pre-imaged laptop. The kit was truly providing a ready-to-use service, not just a cable.

The ASG's were given one of three different flyaway packages. One package was an Executive Communications Kit (ECK). The other two kits were PACSTAR "small" packages with a 441/442 (router/switch) combo. One of the kits fit nicely into a TACNET 400 tough box, designed specifically for the equipment. The other PACSTAR small was packaged in an old equipment bag that fit the networking equipment, a KG175D, one laptop and one phone perfectly. All three kits were couriered to the ASGs on military rotators and delivered to the customer on the flight line. The kits were then taken back to connect at each respective headquarters location, where advanced coordination to get local Network Enterprise Center (NEC) buy-in had already been accomplished.

The Theater Sustainment Command relies heavily on the services of the 44th Expeditionary Signal Battalion (ESB) to provide the rapid network access during Reception Staging Onward-movement and Integration (RSOI) and other Theater Setting missions. With the 44th ESB slated to transition to an ESB Enhanced (ESB-E) prior to Large Scale Global Exercise (DEFENDER) 22 and the potential for reduced upper Tactical Internet (TI) assemblage availability and capacity, the TSC G6 continually seek novel options to conduct its varied mission support. The 21st TSC G6 Military Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) and echelon Brigade S6 sections consist of helpdesk and visual operation and cabling specialties and lack transmission and satellite systems operator-maintainer roles. The TSC Headquarters G6 and Brigade echelon S6 staff sections lack the organic Signal Soldier muscle needed to employ our on-hand satellite COTS terminals at full operational capability. Higher level C&E management, maintenance, troubleshooting and validation is therefore left to the command's network system engineer and network technician within the G6 NETOPS section, whose positions are not guaranteed based on movement cycles and Army priorities.

Faced with these shortfalls, Satellite Communications as a Service (SATaaS) became an attractive option to pair with the MCaaS fly-away

One of the Plug-and-Play Mission Command as a Service (MCaaS) kits sent to the Area Support Groups to support DEFENDER-21. Photo by CW2 Ronnie Eriksson

packages as well as the baseband equipment at each brigade. We saw the following benefits of SATaaS:

1. Tech Refresh: The process of purchasing COTS equipment can take years, if validated at all, and once on-hand the equipment may already be of lesser value to something newer, better, faster, stronger. With SATaaS, a contract is agreed upon yearly and ensures that the newest technology and equipment is used.
2. Warranty: COTS equipment requires warranty services and spare parts supplies for sustainment maintenance. The RMA process for defective parts routinely exceeds the three-month manufacturer warranty commitment and totaled seven

RMA's over a one year span. With SATaaS, a defective terminal or part is exchanged in days. One option was to have an additional terminal to be used as a spare.

3. Training: With SATaaS, a contracted field service representative can be sent with the equipment to provide the most up to date training. Because the Soldiers may already be at their training location when the SATaaS terminals arrive, a complete setup and breakdown Video Teleconference (VTC) and recording could be conducted for the operators prior to receiving the equipment.

4. Maintenance: With SATaaS, the terminals are sent back to the vendor with no obligation to continue leasing in the future. Zero risk of expensive equipment missing critical software updates or being neglected in storage containers.

5. Provisioning: The SATaaS company would be responsible for configuring and testing the terminal prior to operation. If SATaaS has a drawback, it would be readiness. Depending on the lowest cost bidder and the location of the operational unit servicing requirement, terminals may need to be either mailed or flown commercially into the Area of Operation, as was the case for the 21st TSC. The vendor chose to fly the terminals into Germany using a commercial carrier and the time from award to delivery took three days.

A tank being loaded onto a shipping vessel at the conclusion of DEFENDER-21. Photo by Spc. Katelyn Myers

Although that is an impressive timeline, future operations would necessitate a much quicker delivery. A staging depot within Theater would be essential to sustain readiness and deploy the command on short notice. Cost is another significant hurdle. Without a higher level understanding of the cost associated with outfitting, manning, and managing current Army SATCOM networks, it is easy for decision makers and leaders to balk at the seemingly high costs of commercial satellite airtime.

Finally, commercial SATCOM services do not organically tie into the Army network of Regional Hub Nodes (RHN) or Standardized Tactical Entry Point (STEP) sites. This is a problem set for tactical XaaS in general and will become more pronounced as the Army cloud initiative comes online and Impact Level 5 (IL5) and IL6 data from the cloud reach the tactical commander on the ground at the speed of war. One key enabler for XaaS could be to incorporate GAIT Points of Presence (PoP) connections at commercial edge locations. GAIT is special because it creates a common global network that enables high-capacity data exchange between geographically dispersed units anywhere on the planet.

SATaaS performed well during the DEFENDER 21 assessment period.

Two terminals were deployed to support the 21st TSC TAC in Duress, Albania and the 21st TSC Special Troops Battalion TOC in Kucove, Albania from early May thru mid-June 2021. The SATaaS terminals were designed to be the alternate means of communication for the operation centers, and consisted of two 60cm dishes with a CBM-400 modem using High Capacity KA (HCKA) capable of 50/10 Mbps data rates. During testing, the terminals reached 20Mbps download and 5Mbps upload speeds on average. The vendor also provided a 24/7 Network Operations Security Center and demonstrated a customer portal page that could be used to monitor each terminal's location and provide analytical feedback in real time. The operators of the SATaaS terminals on the ground had no issues getting them setup and online, despite never having seen them, let alone taken a training course prior to operation.

For the future of SATaaS, we see the potential options as follows:

1. Lease equipment and satellite time, return to the vendor when not used.
2. Lease equipment and satellite time and keep the equipment.
3. Buy equipment, lease satellite time.

Option 1 is the closest option to a true SATaaS capability which was sufficient for our short-term requirement for testing purposes. For each option, the equipment is used on demand by Soldiers already assigned to the unit and the terminals should be easy to operate by any Soldier regardless of MOS.

Our Army Senior Signal leadership continue to set the course of future Signal support concepts with an eye on Return On Investment (ROI), divestiture, network unification and superior technology; but Moore's Law is increasingly fast and furious as Morrison notes, "the Army is going to have to 'leapfrog' its innovation forward to fully leverage the use of data and cloud technology to support operations on the ground, air, sea, space and cyber domains. That requires a revolutionary approach to adopting information technology and digital transformation to achieve that mission outcome."

Pairing commercial SATaaS with Army MCaaS has been a success in the near term for the 21st TSC as we balance ROI and technological change with future Signal support concepts. MCS, such as DCGS, Command Post of the Future (CPOF) or Command Post Computing Environment (CPCE) have traditionally struggled to connect over Army tactical satellite networks. High bandwidth connections provided by commercial vendors would help provide reliable communication between data in the cloud and the tactical edge. As the Army continues its push to the cloud, XaaS opens up a world of possibilities for innovation. Combining SATaaS and MCaaS with simple to use, quick to set up, Soldier agnostic networking and edge server solutions provides the tactical command center with the right information and data at the right time in order to enable the vision of decision dominance.

CMF 25 MOS Convergence

Office Chief of Signal Enlisted Division

The Enlisted Career Management Field (CMF) 25 must be agile and adaptable to meet the Army's requirement to enable Division and Brigade level mission command in an expeditionary, multi-domain, full-spectrum, and large-scale combat operational environment. The U.S. Army Signal School developed the Signal Enlisted MOS convergence strategy to resolve this operational challenge by redesigning its MOS structure based on functions and levels of communications support, rather than on tasks associated with equipment sets. The convergence of the CMF 25 Enlisted MOS structure creates a Signal Enlisted force that is multi-disciplined, optimally trained, and poised for continued success in the changing operational environment. The Signal School has also established Signal Foundation training to provide the basic building blocks of Signal proficiency to all Signal Soldiers, regardless of MOS.

Phase I of Signal Enlisted MOS Convergence becomes effective October 1, 2021. Phase I reduces the CMF 25 Enlisted structure from 17 MOSs to 13 MOSs by combining selected MOSs. MOS 25M Multimedia Illustrator will combine with MOS 25V Combat Documentation/Production Specialist to form the newly revised MOS 25V Visual Information Specialist. MOS 25C Radio Operator-Maintainer and MOS 25U Signal Support Systems Specialist will form the revised MOS 25U Signal Operations Support Specialist. Additionally, an exceptionally small number (46) of 25W positions will be realigned with the new MOS 25U. These positions were more aligned

Soldiers work on a Mission Planning exercise during Advanced Leader Course Class 25U30 015-21.
Courtesy photo

with the revised MOS 25U than the current MOS 25W. Personnel in those identified 46 positions will remain in their current duty positions until the Soldiers next Enlisted Manning Cycle (EMC). Phase I also combines MOS 25P Microwave Systems Operator-Maintainer, MOS 25S Satellite Communication Systems Operator-Maintainer, and MOS 25T Satellite/ Microwave Systems Chief to form the newly revised MOS 25S Satellite Communication Systems Operator-Maintainer.

Some of the revised MOSs will require transition training. There will be no transition training for the newly revised MOS 25U. These Soldiers will be considered fully qualified on the Phase 1 effective date. Soldiers within MOSs 25S and 25P will receive either a Y2 (former MOS 25P) or Y3 (MOS 25S prior to FY22) Additional Skill

Identifier (ASI) and will be required to complete the associated transition training. The only exception are Soldiers who have completed the 25S/25P Senior Leader Course. Transition training will be executed via Distant Learning (DL) platforms. Regular Army Soldiers will have three years, or until 30 September 2024, to complete the transition training. National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers will have five years, or until September 30, 2026, to complete the training.

Soldiers in MOSs 25M or 25V who complete the Senior Leader Course or the new 25V Advanced Leader Course, after FY21, will not have to complete transition training. Additionally, Soldiers can submit to receive constructive credit to the VI Career Management NCO to validate qualifications and request a waiver for removal of ASI Y2 or Y3. These credentials include:

(1) Intermediate Course at Defense Information School (DMC) for 25Vs or Intermediate Photojournalism course for 25Ms.

(2) One-year certification or vocation training (MOS 25M with a MOS 25V certification and vice versa).

(3) An Associate Degree in a Visual Information field as outlined in DA PAM 600-25.

(4) A Bachelor's Degree in a Visual Information field as outlined in DA PAM 600-25.

MOSs 25M and 25V Soldiers who do not qualify to receive constructive credit must complete transition training. Transition training will be executed via DL platforms. Regular Army Soldiers will have three years, or until 30 September 2024, to complete the transition training. National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers will have five years, or until September 30, 2026, to complete the training.

Phase II takes effect 1 October 2022 and will further reduce the Enlisted CMF 25 structure from 13 MOSs to 10 MOSs. Phase II intro-

An instructor oversees a 25L10 student as she terminates wires during an exercise to connect telephones to the network.
Courtesy photo

duces the new MOS 25H Network Communications Systems Specialist establishing a singular Wide Area Network (WAN) service provider. This MOS was created by combining MOS 25N Nodal Network Systems Operator-Maintainer, MOS 25Q Multichannel Transmission Systems Operator-Maintainer, MOS 25W Telecommunications Operations Chief, and the WAN cabling functions of MOS 25L Cable Systems Operator-Maintainer. Additionally, MOS 25B Information Technology Specialist combined with the local area network cabling functions of MOS 25L to create an enhanced information technology service provider. Phase II also deletes ASI J2 (Communications Cable and Antenna Systems Maintainer), and SQI I (Installer). The skills and knowledge required to perform applicable ASI J2 and SQI I duties were incorporated into the Signal Foundation, MOS 25B, and MOS 25H Network Communications Systems Specialist training.

Soldiers who have graduated from the 25W Senior Leaders Course (SLC) will not be required to complete any transition training for MOS 25H. MOS 25N, MOS 25Q, and MOS 25W Soldiers will be fully MOS 25H qualified without the need to complete transition training. All MOS 25L Non-SLC trained Staff Sergeants and below will receive an ASI Y2 code once they are awarded MOS 25H. The ASI Y2 code indicates that the Soldier must complete transition training to become fully qualified. Beginning FY22, Active Duty Soldiers will have three years, or until September 30, 2025, to complete the required transition training. National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers will have five years, or until September 30, 2027. ASI Y2 will be withdrawn upon completion of the required transition training or the completion of MOS 25H ALC (after October 1, 2022).

In a separate Department of the Army directed action, Signal's three Visual Information MOSs (25R, 25V, and 25Z) will transfer to CMF 46 effective on October 1, 2022. This action, which takes effect the same day as Phase II, will bring the total number of Enlisted Signal MOSs to seven. MOS 25V Soldiers who still require transition training after October 1, 2022 will continue to transition under the auspices of the Army Public Affairs Center.

Information regarding the approved requirements for the revised MOSs can be found on the Office Chief of Signal Enlisted Division milSuite page (https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/ocosed). Direct any questions or concerns to the Office Chief of Signal Enlisted Division at usarmy.gordon.cyber-coe.mbx.sigcoeocosed-mailbox@mail.mil.

Spc. Talyor Darden, Pvt. 1st Class Taimi C. Hunter, Pvt. 2nd Class Samuel Montgomery, and Pvt. 1st Class Sarah Bellamy validate team set-up times for a the AN/TSC-167(G) Satellite Transportable Terminal (STT). Courtesy photo

Army equips first units with at-the-halt network enhancements

Amy Walker
PM Tactical Network, PEO C3T Public Affairs

The Army equipped the first two units — the 1st Armored Division Artillery at Fort Bliss Texas, and the 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Division Sustainment Brigade, at Fort Campbell, Kentucky — with new commercial at-the-halt network enhancements to increase mobility, situational awareness, and ultimately, lethality.

The Army's Project Manager Tactical Network, at the Program Executive Office for Command, Control, Communications-Tactical, conducted new equipment training for the Tactical Network Transport-At The Halt (TNT-ATH) Network Integration Technology Enhancement (NITE) and modernized TNT-ATH Satellite Transportable Terminals (left and right) in August 2021 at Fort Bliss, Texas. NITE addresses the obsolescence of end of life ATH equipment with modernized technologies, arming units with the advanced capability and data exchange they need to combat near peer threats.
Photo by Amy Walker

Tactical Network Transport-At The Halt, or TNT-ATH, leverages robust satellite communications and high-capacity line-of-sight capability to enable mission command, a trusted real-time common operating picture, and global voice, video and data communications from anywhere on the battlefield.

As part of a robust overhaul of ATH network communications across the force, Network Integration Technology Enhancement —or NITE — addresses the obsolescence of end of life ATH equipment with modernized technologies, arming units with the advanced capability and data exchange they need to combat near peer threats.

"The foundation to my success as a commander is my ability to communicate," said Col. Thurman McKenzie, commander for the 1st Armored Division Artillery. "In the fires enterprise, we operate throughout the depth and breadth of the battlefield. I have observers far forward and assets to the rear to coordinate supplies and logistics support, which requires a very strong network."

"This increased computing capability will allow us to operate quicker, use our fires systems the way that they were intended, and ultimately, to get inside of the enemy's decision cycle," he said.

The Army's Project Manager Tactical Network, at the Program Executive Office for Command, Control, Communications-Tactical, completed fielding NITE to the first two units this month. In conjunction with the NITE fieldings, the Army is also fielding modernized TNT-ATH Sat-

ellite Transportable Terminals, which provide robust satellite capability and work together with the ATH network nodes to enable global network transport in and out of a theater of operations. The project office will begin fielding the next two units in the first quarter of fiscal 2022 and will continue to field several units per year until the enhancements are delivered across the extensive TNT-ATH fleet.

NITE includes modernized Joint Network Nodes, Command Post Nodes, user access cases, and a software-based virtual server stack. The enhancements reduce size, weight and power (SWaP), system complexity, and setup time. NITE also improves system reliability and increases computing power by 200 percent. These benefits are derived from new commercial hardware, software and virtualization technologies, which enable more Soldiers to conduct mission command and exchange more data, faster and at the same time, without lag in the network.

Soldiers from the 1st Armored Division Artillery (DIVARTY) train on this Joint Network Node as part of the Tactical Network Transport-At The Halt (TNT-ATH) Network Integration Technology Enhancement (NITE) new equipment training conducted by Project Manager Tactical Network, on August 12, 2021, at Fort Bliss, Texas.
Photo by Amy Walker

"Being able to deploy with more efficient equipment will give the end user the ability to run their estimates [situational assessments] at a much faster pace for the Commander, leading to faster decision making. In a near peer [fight], too much time in this process can be detrimental," said Cpt. Norberto Perez, commander of the 58th Signal Company, 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Sustainment Brigade.

The lighter, more modular ATH NITE equipment is deployed in smaller transit cases with tow handles and wheels that can be dragged like a suitcase, versus permanent shelter integration, and it takes less space inside the shelter and command post, and requires less command post cabling. The user friendly equipment is also easier to operate, train and maintain, with significantly faster set up time, keeping Soldiers connected for longer periods of time, said Cpt. Luis Narvaez, Tactical Network

Col. Peter Gilbert, 101st Division Sustainment Brigade commander, visited the Tactical Network Transport-At The Halt (TNT-ATH) Network Integration Technology Enhancement (NITE) and Satellite Transportable Terminal (STT) Modified Work Order (MWO) training site on August 10, 2021, at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. He is seen here inside a TNT-ATH Joint Network Node.
Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Carlos Davis

Transport-At The Halt Command Post Node operator for the 1st Armored Division Artillery.

The 1st Armored Division Artillery and the 101st Division Sustainment will put their systems through their paces in upcoming training and field exercises and provide continued feedback to the Army to inform potential future enhancements to further refine the systems. The first two units equipped follow a year-long NITE pilot in 2019 that leveraged Soldier feedback from the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, which informed current system design and fielding decisions.

Looking forward, NITE's extensive virtualization of hardware provides the capacity and will make it easier for the Army to insert new capabilities to keep up with technology advancements as they evolve. These can now be done via software upgrades versus having to add more hardware as the service would have to do in the past, McKenzie said.

"No longer are we bogged down by programs of record that take years to develop," McKenzie said. "Now we have fundamental infrastructure that allows us to grow at the pace of change, at the pace of technology."

As the Army modernizes its network communications capabilities, the service will continue to field different units with different capabilities to best suit mission requirements. Whether it's TNT-ATH, TNT-On The Move, or other expeditionary network equipment such as the new Scalable Network Node that replaces TNT-ATH equipment all together, unit requirements will continue dictate the Army's network development, design and fielding efforts.

"As we continue to modernize how data is exchanged across a worldwide battlespace in support of multi domain operations, we will leverage and enhance current capability fielded across the Army, while seeking to integrate innovative commercial technologies," said John Gillette, product manager for Mission Network, Project Tactical Network. "As commercial technology evolves, so too will the Army's network."

The 40th Anniversary of Signal Branch Proponency

Steven J. Rauch
Signal Corps Branch Historian

At the beginning of the 1980s, Army Chief of Staff General Edward C. Meyer directed a study to devise a method to transfer specialty proponency from the Army Staff to TRADOC, specifically each branch service school or other appropriate agency. The Army definition of a proponent was to be an advocate responsible for voicing the professional needs of and recommending actions to maintain accessions and sustain the specialty. Additionally they were the coordinators and chief lobbyists for furthering issues about professional competencies, assignments, promotions, and changes in Army doctrine and supporting systems.

A revision of AR 600-101 *Specialty Proponency* was staffed among the TRADOC schools, the ARSTAFF, MACOMs, and other affected organizations. The Military Personnel Center (MILPERCEN) conducted a series of briefings with branch schools to educate them about the function and later initiated the transition and implementation of the regulation. On October 1, 1981, the new AR 600-101 was published marking the official transfer of proponency responsibilities to TRADOC school commandants to enable them to influence and reinforce personnel management policies in specialties in which they had an interest.

At the Signal Center & School, Maj. Gen. Henry J. Schumacher, the commander and commandant, stated, "A major change in the management of the force took place a few months ago – proponency for soldiers was transferred from the Army staff to the service school commandants. . . Proponency is best described as the life-cycle management of the Signal force; it encompasses the entire range of responsibilities associated with guiding the Signal community – reserve as well as active components – and extends to Signal units in the field."

The specific advice and assist proponent responsibilities given to the commandant under AR 600-101 were grouped into four functional areas: matching soldiers, training and unit needs; insuring professional development opportunities; matching civilian education with force needs; and providing representation on proponency committees.

In anticipation of this change, the Signal warrant officer community took an early lead ploughing into proponency territory. Earlier on August 1, 1981, the commandant established the Signal Warrant Officer Proponency Committee as an advisory body to the commandant for all Signal Warrant Officer matters. The

Maj. Gen. Henry J. Schumacher, Commander US Army Signal Center and Commandant US Army Signal School 1982 – 1983.
Signal Corps Historical Collection

Graphic by Steven J. Rauch

Warrant Officer Committee was composed of eleven members: warrant officer representatives from each warrant MOS, one 0-4 or above from both the Officer Development Division and the Officers Department, a sergeant major representing each CMF 28, 29, and 31 as well as a representative from the Officer Personnel Section, MILPO, Directorate of Personnel and Community Activities (DPCA).

Using the Warrant Officer Committee as a model, the commissioned officer and enlisted proponent working committees were established as well. The working committee's missions were to address issues, research problems, develop positions and recommendations to the commandant for presentation to MILPERCEN.

An additional Signal Center Proponency Committee included the presidents of the working committees plus outside agencies and command representation as appropriate. The function of this committee was coordinate issues both internally and externally, consolidate positions, provide guidance to the working committees and represent the Signal Center & School on proponency matters.

The initial home for the proponent cell was in the Directorate of Training Developments (DTD) who provided about three or four personnel for the new task. That soon changed when TRADOC directed all schools adopt a new *School Model 83* that eliminated the DTDs. On December 12, 1983, the new Signal Branch Proponency Office was established and the former DTD director and his staff be-

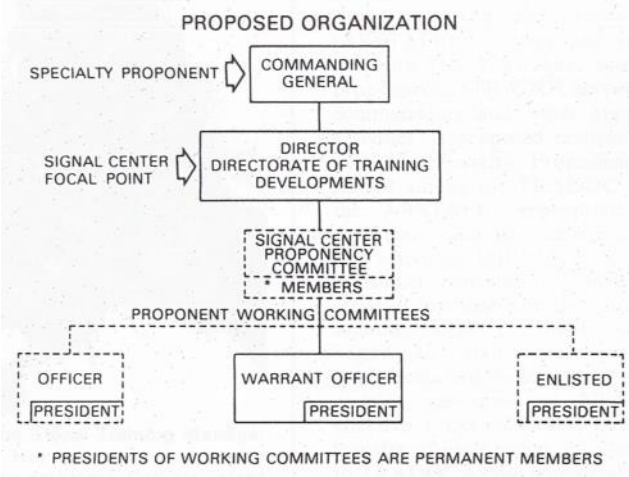


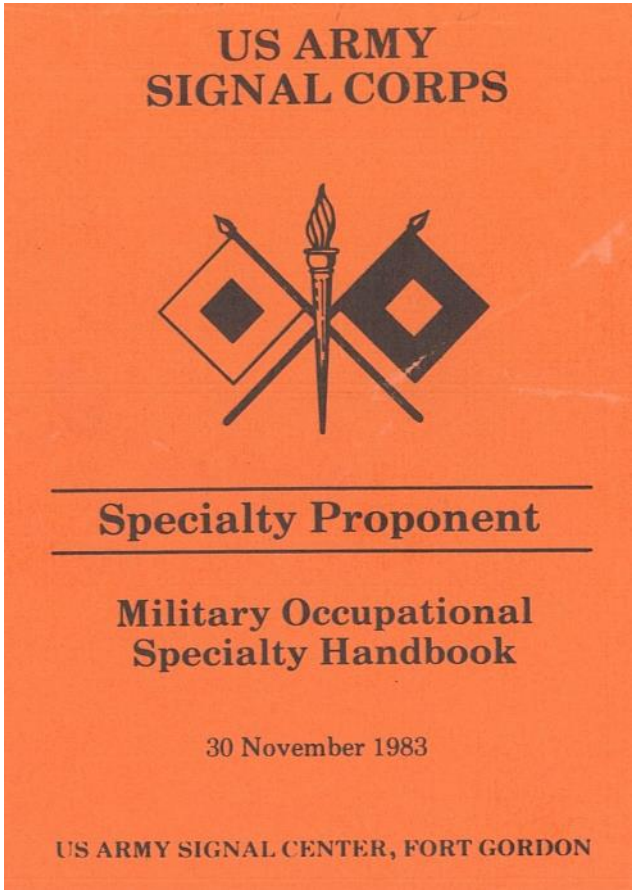
Diagram showing proposed relationships of working committees and proponency committee in 1981.
Signal Corps Historical Collection

came responsible for coordinating the development, documentation and integration of doctrine, equipment and training of Signal Corps personnel into the total army. Though initially the size of the office was uncertain, in order to accomplish this tremendous workload the Signal Center & School requested, and obtained approval from TRADOC to staff the office with 30 authorized personnel.

The relationships of the Signal Center & School, MILPERCEN and other proponent agencies took some time to be defined. One critical boundary was that a branch school was not to become involved with an individual soldier's assignments or career planning, nor would it maintain individual files, records, or have contact with individuals other than to collect data and information. However, the proponency office did develop close working relations with the commissioned, warrant, and enlisted branches of MILPERCEN as well as other proponents in TRADOC.

The function of proponency has evolved since its beginning 40 years ago this month. With the establishment of the Signal Corps Regiment as part of the Army Regimental System in 1986 and the return of an official Chief of Signal, the proponency office transformed into the Office Chief of Signal. Today OCOS still carries on the work of strategic human resources planner and advisor to the Chief of Signal on all Signal personnel development matters for the Signal Regiment. As designed 40 years ago, the management for personnel life-cycle management functions for the Active and Reserve Components continues in the areas of *Structure* (manning); *Acquisition* (recruiting and accessing); *Distribution; Development* (training, education and experience); *Deployment; Compensation* (pay, entitlements and benefits); *Sustainment* (well-being) and *Transition* (separation). Finally, OCOS synchronizes personnel systems with evolving DOTMLPF and communicates the changes to the Signal Regiment.

In 1982 Maj. Gen. Schumacher emphasized that, "Proponency, in a large sense, is the total unit of effort between the schoolhouse and the field; proponency demands that the training base be driven by the needs of the field. Your involvement is vital." That statement was true then as it is true today.



Cover of US Army Signal Corps specialty proponent MOS Handbook, November 30, 1983.
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